THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Arunachal Pradesh Government has requested for taking up the opening of Kepang La Pas, Simu La, Lusa La, Mechuka-Lola Pass, Bumla and Kenzamane. At Present, border trade with China is being conducted through three border passes, namely, Lipulekh, Shipkila and Nathula. Government have proposed to the Chinese side the opening of additional border trading routes, including through Demchok, Nitil and Bumla.

(c) and (d) An Agreement on Border Trade with; Myanmar was signed on 21.1.1994, which was operationalised on 12.4.1995. The Agreement evisages that the Border Trade will take place through custom Posts at Moreh in Manipur and champai in Mizoram, corresponding to Tamu and Rhi in Myanmar. The Ministry of External Affairs has taken up the proposal of opening of third border post at Pangsau Pass with the Government of Myanmar. There is no fresh proposal for openign of any new trade route with Bhutan at present. The India-Bhutan Agreement on Trade, Commerce and Transit, which was renewed on 28th July, 2006 for ten years, provides for 16 points on the border through which trade takes place between the two countries.

(e) Border Trade is for the benefit of people residing near the border on both sides. As such opening of new Border Trade points in the North East region would help to improve the economy of this Region.

Making India export basket for global market

1662. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to bring radical changes in making India an export basket for the global market;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what is the current export position of India;

(d) the action plan to develop Small and Medium Enterprises, with a view to generating more employment opportunities in the country; and

(e) what is the status of SMEs sector in Orissa and what is the action plan of the Centre to further develop this?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) to (c) In the Foreign Trade Policy for the period 2004-09, the Government spelt out a bold vision to increase India's exports and to focus on the generation of additional employment in the process. It is expected that the export target of US $ 150 billion for 2009 will be achieved comfortably. Data available for the period April-January 2006-07 shows that exports increased by US $ 99 billion over the same period last year. It is expected that total exports will exceed US $ 120 billion during the current financial year.

(d) and (e) To facilitate the development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), and to enhance their competitiveness, the Government has enacted the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (MSMED) Act, 2006, which has come into force *w.e.f.* 2 October 2006. In addition, a number of initiatives have also been taken in the Foreign Trade Policy (2004-09) for the development of small and medium enterprises by way of rewarding exports from these sectors particularly under Vishesh Krishi & Gram Udyog Yojana, Focus Product Scheme, Focus Market Scheme, etc. The schemes and programmes envisaged by the Government of India are on national basis and apply uniformally to all the States and U.Ts including the State of Orissa.

Mashelkar Report on patentability

1663. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Mashelkar report on patentability pointed out that our current law is not TRIPS compatible, because it does not allow incremental innovation and, therefore, the current patent law is limited and allows patents only for new chemical entities (NCEs);

(b) if so, whether the Committee has further pointed out that excluding micro organisms *per se* from patent protection would be violative of the TRIPS agreement;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and